

Brundibár: metaphor as resistance to adversity.

Longitudinal study of art therapy intervention with vulnerable children (2021-2024)

Brundibár: la metáfora como resistencia ante la adversidad. Estudio longitudinal de intervención en arteterapia con niños vulnerables (2021-2024)

Estíbaliz Gutierrez Ajamil

Marián López Fernández Cao

Tamara González Casado

Mónica Fontana

Ana Serrano Navarro

Celia Camilli Trujillo

This panel shows the results of the Spanish national project "The creative process and art therapy as a way of well-being in the face of childhood trauma" (Brundibár) launched in 2021 by the University Complutense of Madrid in collaboration with Save the Children, the main partner in this project.

The scope of the overall research is to evaluate the efficacy of an art therapy-based intervention for cognitive, socio-emotional and mental enhancement for children who have suffered adverse childhood experiences and trauma.

After a systematic review of the scientific literature, recent research suggests that art therapy is emerging as the most effective treatment for the child trauma (Abha, 2018; Linz, 2015; Malchiodi, 2018) and has an unparalleled and profound ability to help children recover from trauma in ways that words alone cannot (Yip, 2018). The research has designed six pilot interventions with children (30 hours each), in 2021-2022 (phase 0), 2022-23 (phase 1), and

2023-24 (phase 3) applying observation and evaluation records specifically designed to measure the psychosocial improvement of the participants.

The research design is approached using mixed-methods research where elements of qualitative and quantitative research approaches are combined to meet general purposes of breadth and depth, but also of understanding and corroboration for follow-up of the longitudinal study (Schoonenboom & Johnson, 2017).

The results will show the achievement of specific project objectives and the importance of the production of metaphors. Metaphor, as a hermeneutic and constructionist strategy, has a power of resignification (Ricoeur, 2001) that becomes an element with conceptual value in the applied field of therapy. It contributes to the identification of dominant narratives, enabling interpretation processes that may lead to the construction of alternative ones (Cardona and Osorio, 2014). Metaphor stands as an instrument of resistance to adversity through creation, in line with this conference.

BRUNDIBÁR: La metáfora como resistencia ante la adversidad. Estudio longitudinal de intervención en arteterapia con niños vulnerables (2021-2024)

Este panel muestra los resultados del proyecto nacional "El proceso creativo y la arteterapia como vía de bienestar ante el trauma infantil" (Brundibár) iniciado en 2021 por la Universidad Complutense de Madrid colaborando con Save the Children, socio principal de este proyecto. El objetivo de investigación es evaluar la eficacia de una intervención basada en arteterapia para la mejora cognitiva, socioemocional y mental de niños que han sufrido experiencias adversas y traumas.

Tras una revisión sistemática de la literatura científica, investigaciones recientes sugieren que la arteterapia está surgiendo como el tratamiento más eficaz para el trauma infantil (Abha, 2018; Linz, 2015; Malchiodi, 2018) y tiene una capacidad incomparable para ayudar a la recuperación de una forma que las palabras por sí solas no pueden (Yip, 2018). La investigación ha diseñado seis intervenciones piloto (30 horas) con infancia en tres fases 2021-2022, 2022-23 y 2023-24 (fase 3) aplicando registros de observación y evaluación específicamente diseñados para medir la mejora psicosocial de los participantes.

El diseño de la investigación se aborda mediante métodos mixtos en la que se combinan elementos de enfoques cualitativos y cuantitativos para cumplir propósitos generales de amplitud y profundidad, pero también de comprensión y corroboración para el seguimiento del estudio longitudinal (Schoonenboom & Johnson, 2017).

Los resultados mostrarán el grado de consecución de los objetivos del proyecto y la importancia de la producción de metáforas. La metáfora, como estrategia hermenéutica y constructora, tiene un poder de resignificación (Ricoeur, 2001) que se convierte en un elemento con valor conceptual en el campo de la terapia. Contribuye a la identificación de narrativas dominantes, posibilitando procesos que pueden conducir a la construcción de narrativas alternativas (Cardona y Osorio, 2014). La metáfora se erige como un instrumento de resistencia a la adversidad a través de la creación, en la línea de esta conferencia.

Biography

Estíbaliz Gutiérrez Ajamil PhD is an art therapist specialised in families, in paediatric oncology and children in vulnerable situations. Researcher in the Brundibár team.

Marián López Cao PhD is an art therapist, Chair of Art Education and Art Therapy at the University Complutense of Madrid. Director of the Research Group ‘Social Applications of Art’, main researcher at Brundibar and author of several books.

Tamara Gonzalez Casado is a PhD student under a predoctoral scholarship in Brundibar, codirected by Marián López Cao y Ana Serrano. Art therapist specialised in childhood trauma and schools.

Mónica Fontana PhD is Associate Professor in Research and Psychology in the Education Department, specialised in implementing mixed methods in research in complex social contexts.

Ana Serrano Navarro PhD is an accredited art therapist, teacher and supervisor. Co-ordinator of projects in art therapy within the hospital specialised in youngsters, mental health and eating disorders.

Celia Camilli Trujillo has a PhD in Advanced Pedagogical Knowledge and Master Scientiarium in Psychology of Human Development. University professor with expertise in research methods.

Recent publications and conference presentations

López Fernández Cao, M., Peral Jiménez, C. (2021). **Finding new self-narratives through artist book and life story in cumulative interpersonal trauma** (p.47-59). En Kapitan y Van Hugh (Ed). *The Emerging Picture: International Advances in Art Therapy Research and Practice*. Cambridge Scholars Publishing.

López Fdz. Cao, M. (2021) **On the unknown that art addresses: Space, vacuum and awareness in the arts**. In: López Fdz. Cao, M., Hougham, R., Scoble, S. (2021) *Imagining windmills. Trust, truth and the unknown in Arts Therapies*. London, Routledge.

Fontana, M. y Camilli, C. (2021). **COURSE 103: Child Development. Guideline for instructors and workbook for students**. World Bank Group, LGIHE & Early Learning Partnership. ISBN 978-84-09-47856-9

López-Escribano, C., Orío-Aparicio, C., & López Fdz. Cao, M. (2023). **An overview of historical and contemporary perspectives in art therapy in Spain: A bibliometric analysis of Spanish art therapy research**. *The Arts in Psychotherapy*, 83, 2-8.

<https://doi.org/10.1016/j.aip.2023.102015> (JCR: 1.8 94/131 Q3. Psychology, Clinical) (SJR: 42, Q2, Clinical Psychology)

Fontana, M. y Camilli, C. (2022). **Why to implement Art Therapy for Children with Trauma? A qualitative analysis of the last-ten-years research.** 18th International Conference of Qualitative Inquiry, University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign, 18th-21st May.